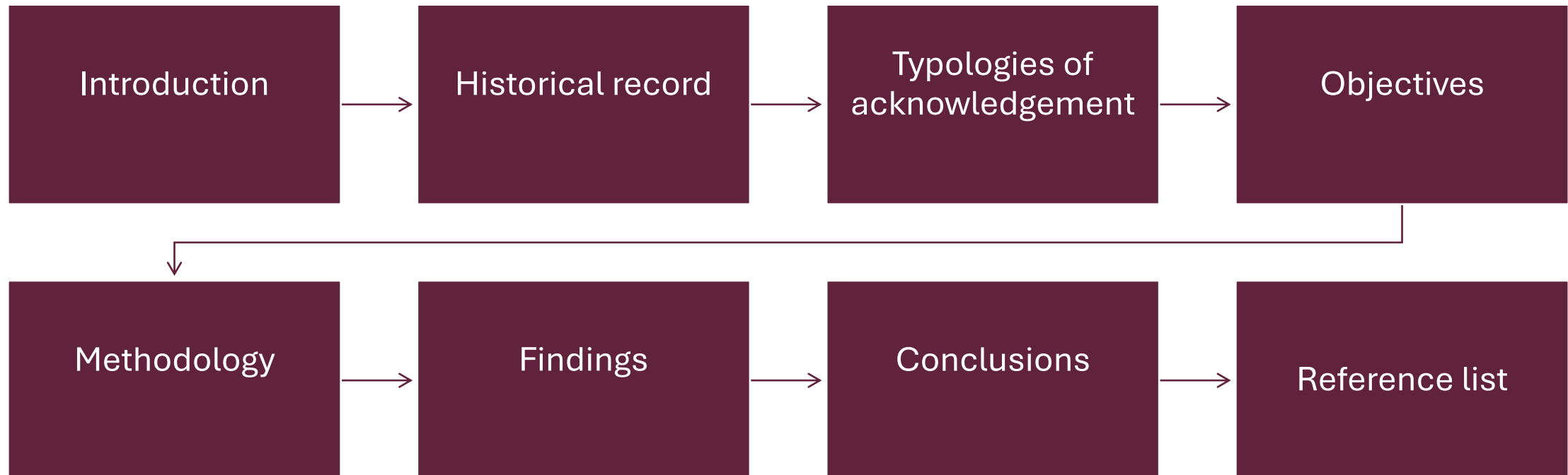# Acknowledgement of libraries, archives and museums in music theses and dissertations in South Africa (2011-2022)

OU HOOFGEBOU

By Siviwe Bangani, PhD

Photo by Stefan Els

Table of Contents

Introduction → Historical record → Typologies of acknowledgement → Objectives

Methodology → Findings → Conclusions → Reference list

Introduction

➢ Role include collecting, preserving, archiving and distributing

➢ Play a role in sustainable human development

➢ Previously resources in physical formats

➢ Emergence of technology - new forms of heritage materials and new platforms to store and archive material

➢ Technology – an existential threat to LAMs

➢ Increased need for demonstrating impact and RoI

➢ Technology – also new opportunities for assessing the impact e.g altmetrics

➢ Altmetrics - alternative approaches to the traditional ways of measuring impact (Priem, 2014) e.g. views, downloads, reads, tweets, mentions, engagements and many more.

➢ Acknowledgements – one of the altmetric indicators of impact in academic libraries
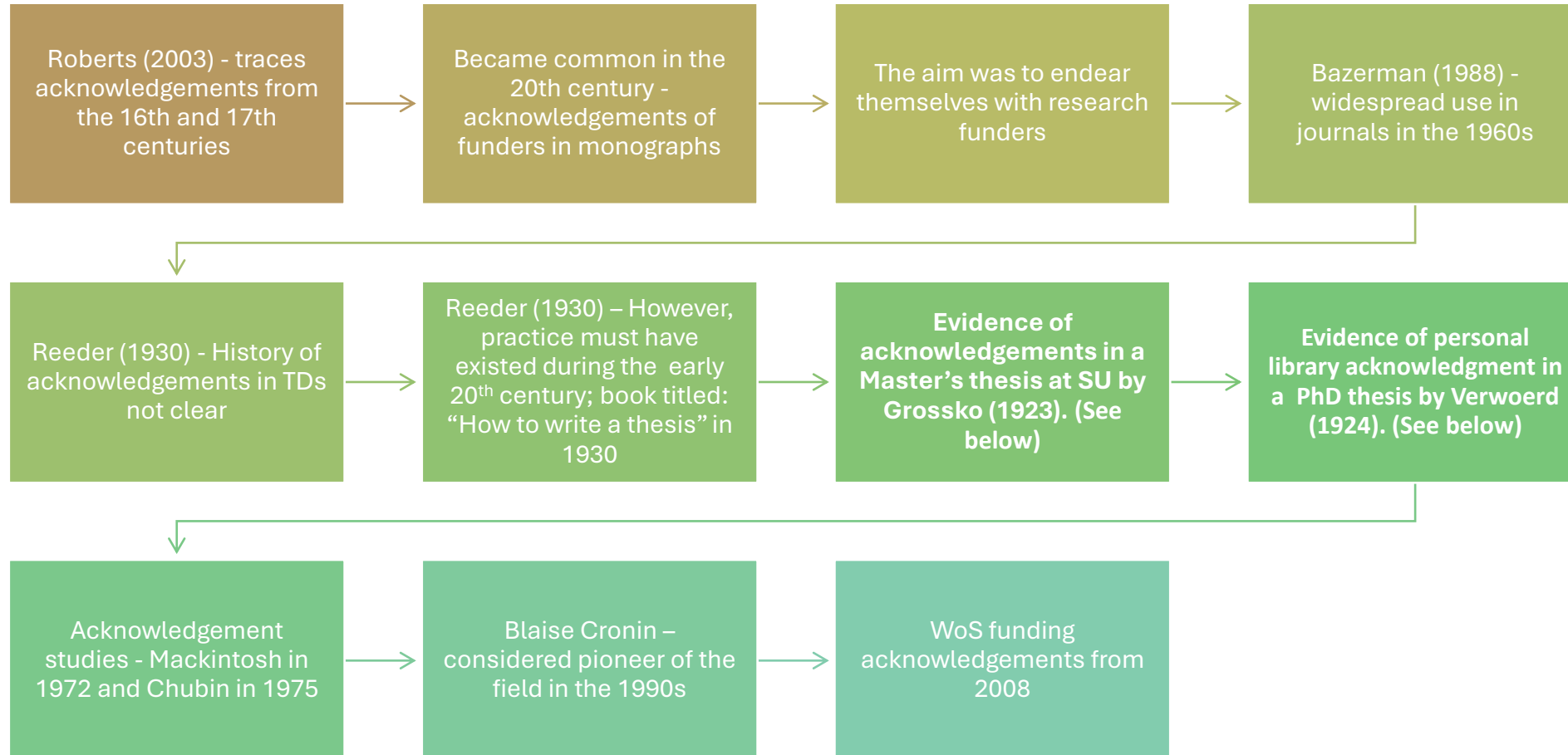
Introduction

➢ Acknowledgements –gratitude given to a broad range of contributors to scholarly outputs

➢ Provide evidence of assistance by other and introduces the student as a social being

➢ Acknowledgements are voluntary, often have no cumulative or scholarly value, no guidance given to students on how to write them (Adekannbi, 2023)

➢ Acknowledgements are cumbersome as a data source so the require careful collection and categorisation (Cronin, 2001)

➢ Less appeal as research assessment measures to bibliometricians and librarians (Adekannbi, 2023)

➢ Despite this, Hubbard et al. (2018) – used as a complementary measure of the impact of libraries and archives

➢ Limited studies on acknowledgements but more so those of archives and museums in scholarly publications.

➢ This study used acknowledgements in ETDs as a proxy to measure impact .

Objectives of the study

➢ explore the extent of LAM acknowledgements in Music ETDs at South African universities
➢ determine LAM institutions acknowledged in South African Music ETDs
➢ identify LAM staff acknowledged in South African Music ETDs
➢ categorise the acknowledgement of LAMs by South African Music students

Brief history of acknowledgements

Stellenbosch
UNIVERSITY
IYUNIVESITHI
UNIVERSITEIT

forward together
sonke siya phambili
saam vorentoe

Roberts (2003) - traces acknowledgements from the 16th and 17th centuries →
Became common in the 20th century - acknowledgements of funders in monographs →
The aim was to endear themselves with research funders →
Bazerman (1988) - widespread use in journals in the 1960s

Reeder (1930) - History of acknowledgements in TDs not clear →
Reeder (1930) – However, practice must have existed during the early 20th century; book titled: "How to write a thesis" in 1930 →
Evidence of acknowledgements in a Master's thesis at SU by Grossko (1923). (See below) →
Evidence of personal library acknowledgment in a PhD thesis by Verwoerd (1924). (See below)

Acknowledgement studies - Mackintosh in 1972 and Chubin in 1975 →
Blaise Cronin – considered pioneer of the field in the 1990s →
WoS funding acknowledgements from 2008

Acknowledgement in a master's thesis at SU by Grossko (1923)

¹) Aan wie, saam met sy staf, ek hierby my hartlike dank uitspreek vir die geduld en vrindelike bereidwilligheid waarmee hulle—mondeling sowel as skriftelik—alle inligtinge wat ek nodig had, steeds aan my gegee het.—

"to whom, together with his staff, I hereby express my heartfelt thanks for the patience and friendly willingness with which they continued to give me - verbally as well as in writing - all the information I needed."

Acknowledgment in a PhD thesis by Verwoerd (1924)

Ek moet 'n baie opregte waardering uitspreek teenoor Prof. Dr. R. W. Wilcocks, onder wie ek studeer het, vir die hulp en raad wat hy my verleen het sonder om eie moeite of tyd te ontsien, en vir die gebruik van sy biblioteek wat hy tot my beskikking gestel het. Veral moet ek sy aandeel noem in die uitwerk van die eksperimente, waarby hy ook as proefpersoon gedien het, en moet ek melding maak van sy sorgvuldige oorlees van die manuskrip waardeur die inhoud hoofsaaklik die mate van noukeurigheid verkry het wat dit mag besit.

My hartlike dank kom die volgende here toe wat hulle ook as proef-persone vir die eksperimente beskikbaar gestel het: W. S. Conradie, M.A.,B.D.; A.Dekker, M.A.,B.Educ.; J.D. Conradie, M.A.; J.R.v.d.Merwe, B.A., J.van Jaarsveld, B.A.; P.J.du Toit, B.A.; I. Mommsen; en B. Lang, B.A..

Acknowledgment in a PhD thesis by Verwoerd (1924)

I must express a very sincere appreciation towards Prof. Dr. R W Wilcocks, under whom I studied, for the help and advice he gave me without sparing his own effort or time, and for the use of his library which he made available to me. I must mention his part in working out the experiments, in which he also served as a test subject. I must mention his careful proofreading of the manuscript, by which the content has chiefly acquired the degree of accuracy which it may possess.

My heartfelt thanks go to the following gentlemen who avail themselves as test subjects for the experiments:

W.S. Conradie, M.A., B.D.;
A.Dekker. M.A., B.Ed.;
J.D. Conradie. M.A.;
R.v.d.Merwe, B.A.;
J.van Jaaraveld, B.A.;
P.J.du Tait. B.A.;
I. Mommsen and
B. Lang, B.A

Classifications of acknowledgements

Mackintosh (1972)
- Help with facilities
- Access to data
- Help rendered by individuals (e.g. reading, statistical analysis and editing)

McCain (1991)
- Access to research related information
- Access to unpublished results/data
- Peer interactive communication
- Technical assistance
- Manuscript preparation

Cronin (1991)
- Paymaster
- Moral support
- Dogsbody
- Technical
- Prime mover
- Trusted assessors

Classifications of acknowledgements

Cronin (1993)

- Moral support
- Financial support
- Access (to facilities, data, specimens, samples, documents, materials, etc.)
- Clerical support
- Technical
- Peer interactive communication
- Unclassifiable

Cronin (1995)

- Editorial/linguistic support
- Conceptual support
- Moral support
- Instrumental/technical support
- Clerical support
- Financial support
- Unclassifiable

Hyland (2004)

- Reflective move
- Thanking move
- Announcing move

Classifications of library acknowledgements

Hubbard et al. (2018

- Facilities
- People
- Resources
- Services

Brief Note on Methodology

➢ Bibliometrics and qualitative content analysis

➢ Data collected from IRs of 9 public universities in South Africa

➢ Embargoed and inaccessible ETDs were excluded

LAM acknowledgements in Music ETDs (2011-2022)

University name	Number of Music ETDs	Number of ETDs that acknowledged LAMs	Percentage of LAM ETDs acknowledged
SU LIS	202	39	19.3%
UP Library	185	27	14.6%
NWU Library	69	9	13%
UCT Libraries	67	12	17.9%
NMU Library	29	3	10.3%
UKZN Library	29	2	6.9%
RU Library	30	2	6.7%
UNISA Library	22	2	9.1%
UFS LIS	21	5	23.8%
Grand Total	654	101	15.4%

LAM institutions acknowledged in the ETDs (2011-2022)

Stellenbosch UNIVERSITY IYUNIVESITHI UNIVERSITEIT | forward together sonke siya phambili saam vorentoe

LAMs acknowledged	Number of times LAMs acknowledged
SU LIS	36
UP Library	32
UCT Libraries	21
NWU LIS	14
National Library of South Africa	6
UFS LIS	4
NMU Library	4
Bodleian Library	2
Cambridge University Library	2
Musée du quai Branly-Jean Chirac	2
National Archives of South Africa	2
SABC Sound Archives	2
SU Archives	2
UKZN Library	2
Western Cape Archives and Records Services	2

LAM staff acknowledged in the ETDs (2011-2022)

Name of LAM Institution	Number of individuals acknowledged by name	Number of times those individuals acknowledged
SU LIS	23	67
UCT Libraries	12	25
NWU LIS	6	13
NWU LIS	5	13
UFS LIS	4	5
NMU Library	4	4
National Library of South Africa	3	3
Maseno University Library	3	3
District Six Museum	2	2
Musée du quai Branly-Jean Chirac	2	2

Categorisation of the LAM acknowledgements

Type of support	Description	
Customer care	➢ **Effciency and effectiveness of service** ➢ **Willingness to help and values associated with good customer care** ➢ **Going the extra mile**	

I am immensely grateful! I would also like to thank Julie Strauss, senior librarian of the WH Bell Music Library, South African College of Music, who was of great assistance to me during the time I spent writing the thesis.

I am indebted to the following heads of libraries and archives, and their personnel, for their kind assistance and advice during many hours spent at their institutions:

- supervisor: reader services of the National Library of South Africa
- reading room official of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service
- manager at Manuscripts & Archives Department, University of Cape Town
- archivist at Documentation Centre for Music, University of Stellenbosch

Categorisation of the LAM acknowledgements

Type of support	Description
Data support	➢ **Research data management** ➢ **Data analysis software** ➢ **Provision of access to data** ➢ **Provision of data** **Acknowledgements** · SABC Media Library: the manager and the staff, for all the trouble they went through to collect the right CD recordings for data collection, and their valuable inputs for this study.

Categorisation of the LAM acknowledgements

Type of support	Description
Professional and subject-specific support	➢ **Professionalism** ➢ **Experience and tacit knowledge** ➢ **Skills and expertise** ➢ **Subject knowledge** noticed that I was becoming a bibliophile, and she promptly gave me the chance to work in the music library at the University of Pretoria. Her expertise has contributed greatly to the success of this research project, not only through the skills I learnt from her, but also through the numerous enquiries that she has fielded throughout the years.

Categorisation of the LAM acknowledgements

Type of support	Description
Information resources support	➢ **Access and provision of information resources** ➢ **Support and guidance with searching resources** ➢ **Reproduction and sending of resources** for their tireless efforts in chasing down countless obscure journal references and for never questioning my perpetual renewals of library loans.
Citation support	➢ **Assistance with finding missing references** ➢ **Support with reference management software** ➢ **Quality checking of references** She also did the tedious and menial work of checking the citations for inaccuracies.

Categorisation of the LAM acknowledgements

Training and workshops support	
	➢ Teaching them skills to independently access library resources ➢ Facilitating researcher empowerment workshops To the **librarians** in the W.H. Bell Music Library, for their graciousness, continual good humour and highly competent and knowledgeable support. Your continual willingness to help and your teaching about internet search engines and their uses are without equal.
Space provision	➢ Reading and study spaces ➢ Meeting spaces ➢ Discussion spaces Special thanks to the staff at Stellenbosch University Museum who made the museum space available for one of my artistic research events

Categorisation of the LAM acknowledgements

Moral support	
	➤ **Encouragement**
	➤ **Motivation**
	➤ **Offering a shoulder to cry**
	➤ **Listening**
	➤ **Colleagues**
	• Thank you ⬚⬚⬚ at the Music library, for anticipating my information needs. Your unusual dual role as information expert and enthusiastic cheerleader continues to amaze me.
Unclassifiable	
	➤ **Acknowledgements of a general nature**
	➤ **No stated reason for acknowledgement**
	The staff at the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Documentation Services, Namibian National Library, SWAPO Party archives, *The Namibian* newspaper, Stellenbosch University Library and Information Service, the National Library and the University of Cape Town Library.

Conclusion

➢ Study argues that Acknowledgements in ETDs can be used to demonstrate impact of LAM institutions and individuals working in those institutions.

➢ However, acknowledgements should be considered as one among a plethora of assessments and measures in an impact-driven environment.

➢ Anecdotal evidence that acknowledgements may conform to citation principles such as the Mathew effect.

➢ Qualitative expressions in acknowledgment can help to demonstrate the various ways by which LAM institutions contribute to research students' success (Hubbard *et al.*, 2018).

➢ LAMs should consider developing their own internal acknowledgement databases that may help them to demonstrate impact.

➢ With the emergency of generative artificial intelligence and other tools, this database can be within the realm of possibility for many libraries.

➢ Such a database can serve as a springboard for a broader ETD acknowledgements database in the near future.

➢ The results of this study have practical and theoretical implications.

➢ It is possible to extract acknowledgements to LAM institutions in ETDs as a way of demonstrating the impact of these heritage institutions.

Conclusion

➢ LAM institutions must actively seek automated ways of extracting this important data source for the purpose of demonstrating their impacts.

➢ These results also point to the possibility of considering acknowledgements as alternative measures of impact parallel to citations and other altmetrics.

➢ Bibliometricians, therefore, have an opportunity to theorise about and conduct more studies in this promising niche.

➢ Furthermore, this study showed that the value of acknowledgements goes beyond the metrics but also that these qualitative expressions can serve as an opportunity to demonstrate the kind of research support that LAM institutions provide to research and education.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues at Stellenbosch University (SU) Library and Information Service for their valuable insights when I initially presented this study to them. In particular, I am thankful to Elizabeth Moll-Willard and Hanlie Strydom for their ideas and suggestions, which have been incorporated into this presentation. Additionally, I acknowledge Marieta Buys, Head of Special Collections at the SU LIS, for her assistance in locating acknowledgements in old theses at the SU Library, which are referenced in this study.

Reference list

Adekannbi, J.O. 2023. Acknowledgement behaviour of Information Science students of Nigeria's premier university. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 55(2): 323-333.

Cronin, B. 1991. Let the credits roll: a preliminary examination of the role played by mentors and trusted assessors in disciplinary formation. Journal of documentation, 47(3): 227-239.

Cronin, B. 2001. Acknowledgement trends in the research literature of information science. Journal of documentation, 57(3): 427-433.

Cronin, B., McKenzie, G. & Rubio, L. 1993. The norms of acknowledgement in four humanities and social sciences disciplines. Journal of documentation, 49(1): 29-43.

Cronin, B., Mckenzie, G. & Stiffler, M. 1992. Patterns of acknowledgement. Journal of documentation, 48(2): 107-122.

Cronin, B. & Weaver, S. 1995. The praxis of acknowledgement: from bibliometrics to influmetrics. Revista Española de Documentación Científica, 18 (2): 172-177.

Hubbard, D.E., Laddusaw, S., Kitchens, J. & Kimball, R. 2018. Demonstrating library impact through acknowledgment: an examination of acknowledgments in theses and dissertations. The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 44(3): 404-411.

Hyland, K. 2003. Dissertation acknowledgements: the anatomy of a Cinderella genre. Written Communication, 20: 242–268.

Reference list

Mackintosh, K. H. 1972. Acknowledgement patterns in sociology (Doctoral dissertation). University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

McCain KW (1991) Communication, competition, and secrecy: the production and dissemination of research-related information in genetics. *Science Technology & Human Values*, 16(4): 491–516.

Priem, J. 2014. "Altmetrics." In: Cronin, B. & Cassidy R. Sugimoto, C.R. (eds.). Beyond bibliometrics: harnessing multidimensional indicators of scholarly impact. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. pp: 263-287. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1507.01328.

Reeder, W. G. 1930. How to write a thesis. Chicago: Public School Publishing Company.

Roberts, S. 2003. On acknowledgements, the inquisition was easier. New York Times, E1,E16. https://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/27/books/on-acknowledgmentsthe-inquisition-was-easier.html.